



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING COMMISSION
REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 12/08/2021

ITEM NO: 6

DATE: December 3, 2021
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Consider Forwarding a Recommendation to the Town Council to Rescind the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Forward a recommendation to the Town Council to rescind the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

BACKGROUND:

The Los Gatos Boulevard Plan (www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/373) was adopted in 1997 by Resolutions 1997-036 and -038 (Exhibits 2 and 3).

Over the last number of years there have been many comments regarding the fact that the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan may no longer be relevant given the adoption of the Commercial Design Guidelines in 2005, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan updated in 2020, and the pending draft 2040 General Plan. The draft 2040 General Plan currently includes an Implementation Program that calls for the rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

On May 25, 2021, the Council Policy Committee considered and recommended the rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan (Exhibits 4 and 5).

DISCUSSION:

Town staff have reviewed the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan and have confirmed that all elements are either included in or superseded by the Commercial Design Guidelines (adopted in 2005) and Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (updated in 2020).

PREPARED BY: Jennifer Armer, AICP
Planning Manager

Reviewed by: Community Development Director

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The project is Categorical Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061(b)(3), in that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this project will have a significant effect on the environment.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

At time of preparation of this report, no public comment has been received.

CONCLUSION:

A. Recommendation

Based on the direction of the Town Council Policy Committee, staff recommends that the Planning Commission review the information included in the staff report and forward a recommendation to the Town Council for rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan. If the Commission agrees, it should take the following actions:

1. Make the required finding that the rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan is Categorical Exempt from CEQA (Exhibit 1);
2. Make the required finding that the rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan is consistent with the General Plan (Exhibit 1); and
3. Forward a recommendation to the Town Council to rescind the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan (Exhibit 2).

B. Alternatives

Alternatively, the Commission can:

1. Continue the matter to a date certain with specific direction;
2. Forward a recommendation to the Town Council to rescind the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan with additional direction; or
3. Forward a recommendation to the Town Council to not rescind the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

EXHIBITS:

1. Required Findings
2. Resolution 1997-136 – Approving the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan
3. Resolution 1997-138 – Approving Amendment 1 to the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan
4. Council Policy Committee May 25, 2021 Staff Report
5. Council Policy Committee May 25, 2021 Minutes

PLANNING COMMISSION – December 8, 2021
REQUIRED FINDINGS FOR:

Los Gatos Boulevard Plan Rescission

Consider Forwarding a Recommendation to the Town Council to Rescind the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

FINDINGS

Required Findings for CEQA:

- It has been determined that there is no possibility that this project will have a significant impact on the environment; therefore, the project is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15061 (b)(3).

Required Findings for the General Plan:

- The rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan is consistent with the General Plan.

EXHIBIT 1

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RESOLUTION 1997-136

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
MAKING THE NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND APPROVING
THE LOS GATOS BOULEVARD PLAN AND DESIGN STANDARDS**

WHEREAS, the Town of Los Gatos has completed a major study of Los Gatos Boulevard;
and

WHEREAS, the General Plan Committee approved Resolution No.1997-1 recommending
Town Council adoption of the Draft Los Gatos Boulevard Plan on November 12, 1997; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing for consideration of
the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan and Design Standards on August 13, 1997; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council conducted public hearings for consideration of the Los
Gatos Boulevard Plan and Design Standards on September 15, 1997 and December 1, 1997; and

WHEREAS, during these hearings, the Planning Commission and Town Council
considered public input on the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan and Design Standards; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan Committee, Architectural Standards/Hillside Committee,
and Planning Commission recommended approval of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan and Design
Standards; and

WHEREAS, the Town has in good faith worked with residents, merchants and property
owners to address their concerns, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to establish a plan and design standards to provide direction to
decision makers, architects, designers, engineers and developers; and

WHEREAS, the Public Improvements Section of the Plan does not include policy involving
bike lanes north of Blossom Hill Road or narrowing travel lanes.

RESOLVED, that the Town Council finds that the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan and Design
Standards will not have a significant environmental impact and makes the Negative Declaration.

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Council of the Town of Los Gatos hereby adopts the
Los Gatos Boulevard Plan and Design Standards attached hereto as Exhibits A and B respectively.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Town Council held on the 15th day of December 1997, by the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

AYES: Randy Attaway, Joanne Benjamin, Steven Blanton, Jan Hutchins,
Mayor Linda Lubeck

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

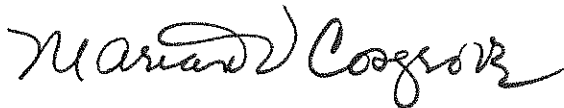
ABSTAIN: None

SIGNED:



MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA

ATTEST:



CLERK OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA

LOS GATOS
BOULEVARD

DRAFT

PLAN

"A Comprehensive Long Term Plan to Enhance Los Gatos Boulevard"



TOWN OF LOS GATOS

FALL 1997

EXHIBIT A

TOWN OF LOS GATOS OFFICERS AND STAFF

Town Council

Linda Lubeck, Mayor
Jan Hutchins, Vice Mayor
Joanne Benjamin
Randy Attaway
Steven Blanton

Planning Commission

Michael H. Abkin
Sandy Decker, Vice Chair
Marcia Jensen, Chair
Kathryn Morgan
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General Plan Committee

Michael H. Abkin, Chair
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Jim Piper, Assistant Town Manager
Lee Bowman, Planning Director
Bud Lortz, Senior Planner
Sandy Baily, Associate Planner
Trish Duarte, Sr. Engineering Tech
Kristine Syskowski, Assistant Planner
Erwin Ordonez, Assistant Planner
Ryan Bane, Planning Technician
Chris Lane, Planning Technician
Martin Alkire, Planning Tech/Code Compliance

LOS GATOS BOULEVARD PLAN

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Vision Statement

The Los Gatos Boulevard Plan has been created and adopted in order to establish a partnership among residents, businesses, property owners and the Town government to develop the Boulevard as a distinct place that enhances the quality of life of the people of Los Gatos through its economic vitality, beauty, and community.

To realize this Vision, the overall Goals of the Plan are to:

- Preserve and project the essence of Los Gatos' history, individuality, character, and natural environment.
- Promote commercial activity that complements the whole Town. Provide a dependable source of income, employment opportunities, goods and services.
- Provide for attractive, easy and effective access to, from and through the Boulevard.
- Provide effective links and interfaces between neighborhoods and commercial areas.

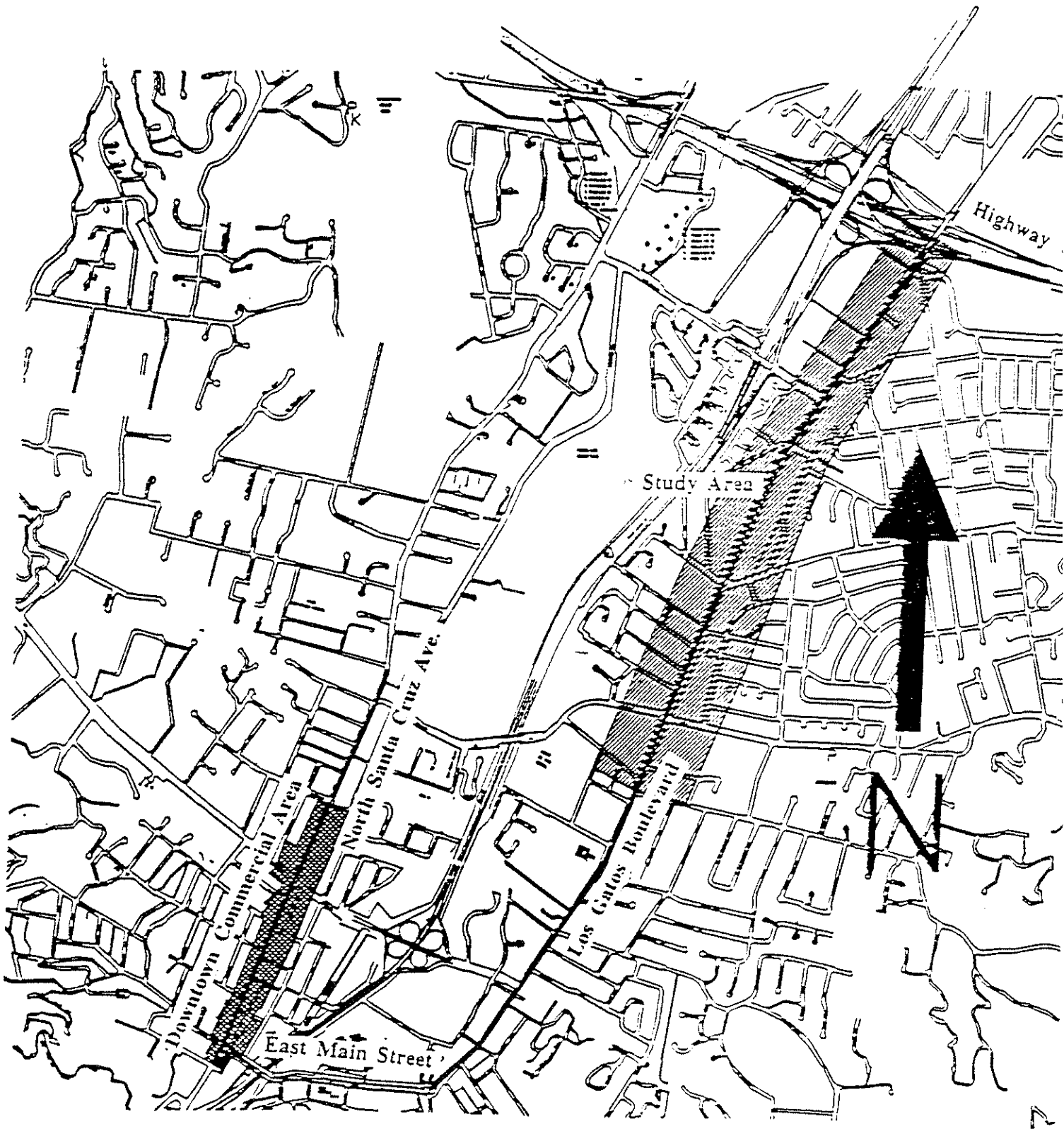
The purpose of the Plan is to establish short, medium and long range goals, policies and implementation measures including priorities for Boulevard improvements.

B. Study Area and Conditions

The Los Gatos Boulevard Plan Study Area extends for approximately 1.8 miles between the Route 85 interchange to the north and Spencer Road to the south. Land use in this area consists primarily of mixed use commercial, neighborhood shopping centers, auto sales and repair and office. Existing zoning provides for the broadest range of mixed use commercial and residential uses excluding industrial and manufacturing. The following vicinity maps illustrate 1) the study area location in relationship to downtown Los Gatos, and 2) the land uses along Los Gatos Boulevard as of June 1997.




Several events have combined to lead to the current conditions along Los Gatos Boulevard: construction of Highway 85, relocation of several businesses leaving large vacant lots and buildings, and a message from both business owners and residents for a re-examination of the development and public improvement goals for the Boulevard. These events were the catalyst for the Town's re-evaluation of the Boulevard development goals.

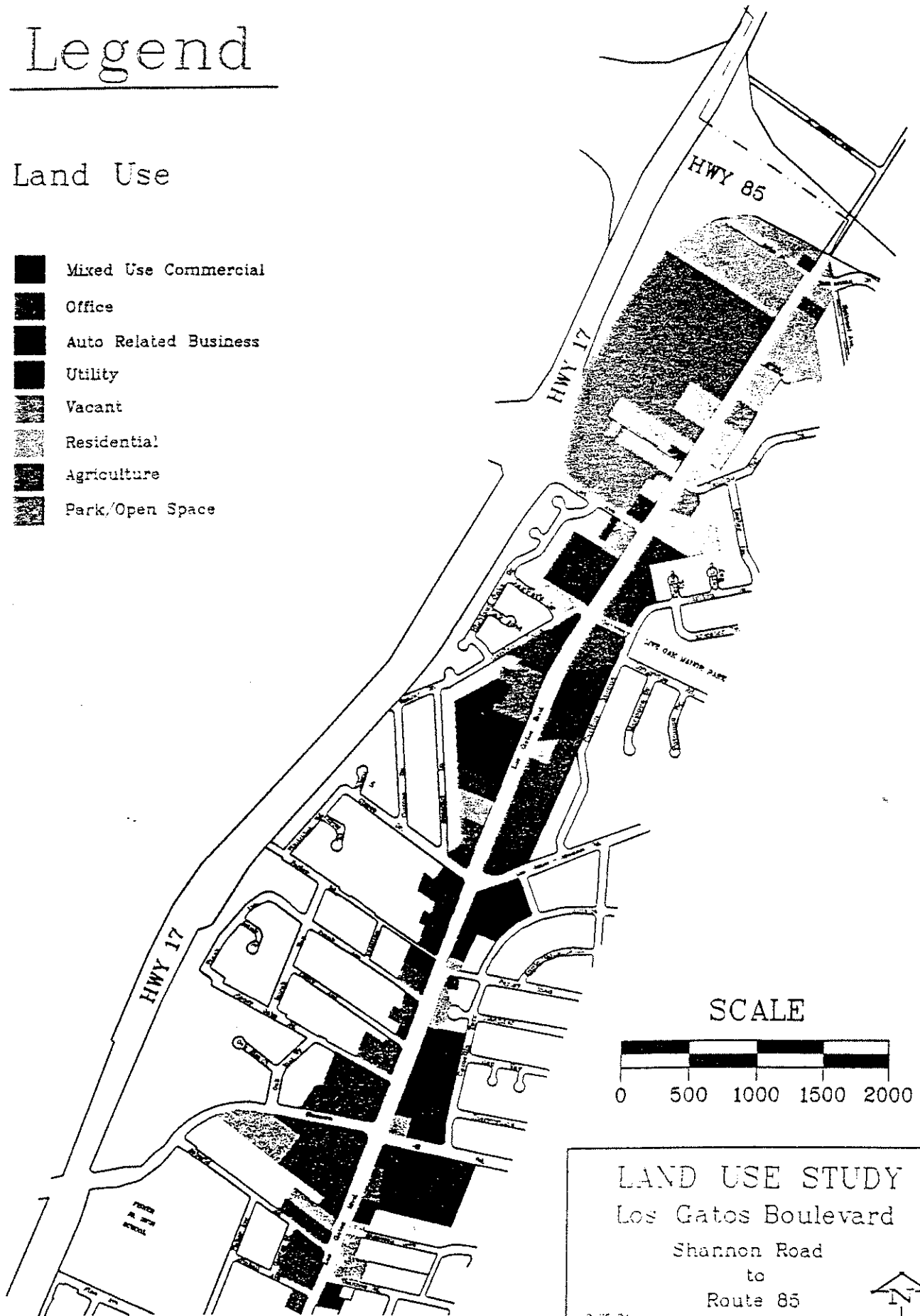
Study Area Map



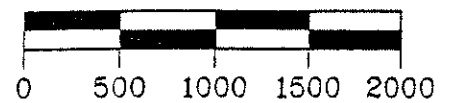
Legend

Land Use

-  Mixed Use Commercial
-  Office
-  Auto Related Business
-  Utility
-  Vacant
-  Residential
-  Agriculture
-  Park/Open Space



SCALE



LAND USE STUDY
 Los Gatos Boulevard
 Shannon Road
 to
 Route 85

9-13-94
 DTM: KMT

SEACAD, LOS GATOS



C. Background

Los Gatos Boulevard was originally named San Jose-Los Gatos Road. In 1904 the San Jose-Los Gatos Interurban Railway was established and hourly trips between San Jose and Los Gatos were instituted. San Jose-Los Gatos Road was designated a state highway and Caltrans established the plan line in the early 1940's calling for a 120 foot right-of-way. Caltrans abandoned the Boulevard as a state highway when Highway 17 was constructed.

San Jose-Los Gatos Road was renamed Los Gatos Boulevard and the Town adopted the plan line for a 120 foot right-of-way in 1963 to accommodate the community's transportation needs of the future. At full build out the street is designed to include six travel lanes, street parking, median and bike lanes. The cities of Campbell and San Jose have adopted similar plan lines to the six lane arterial. Los Gatos Boulevard runs north and south extending to the Town's northern border at the Route 85 interchange and southward to Main Street. Los Gatos Boulevard becomes Bascom Avenue at Samaritan Drive. In 1990, the Town signed the Route 85 agreement that called for a full interchange at Los Gatos Boulevard/Bascom Avenue and Route 85.

In 1989, the Council appointed the Commercial Specific Plan Committee to study all commercial districts and identify goals and implementation measures that would encourage commercial growth and stability. After completion of its study, in May 1991, the Committee submitted its report to the Town Council which identified specific goals and implementation measures for each commercial district in Town. The goals for the Los Gatos Boulevard study area were to encourage new automobile dealerships, develop a major commercial shopping center, provide clear direction to potential developers and work with existing auto dealers, commercial property owners and merchants to develop a marketing strategy specifically for Los Gatos Boulevard.

Between 1989 and 1992 the Town lost five auto dealerships, leaving vacant lots and buildings and resulting in a significant loss of sales tax revenue. But since 1994, two new auto dealerships have opened on previously vacant dealership lots. Other vacant or underdeveloped lots along the Boulevard have been developed with the Blossom Hill Pavilion, Speedee Lube and Office Depot.

In February 1993, the Town adopted the *Route 85/Vasona Light Rail* element of the General Plan. This General Plan amendment changed the land use designation from residential and agricultural to mixed use commercial for property along both sides of Los Gatos Boulevard between Lark Avenue and Samaritan Drive. The 40 plus acres on the west side of Los Gatos Boulevard are bordered by Highways 85 and 17 and Lark Avenue. The General Plan states that this area should be developed with destination retail and limited neighborhood commercial. The east side of Los Gatos Boulevard, consisting of 13 acres, is designated for mixed use office and high density residential. It is surrounded by single family residential and medical office uses.

In 1993, the Boulevard Community Alliance was formed consisting of Los Gatos Boulevard business and property owners with the goal of enhancing and promoting the Boulevard. In March 1994, the Town Council directed the General Plan Committee to study alternatives and make recommendations for improving the appearance and commercial viability of the Boulevard. On September 6, 1994 the Council approved the General Plan Committee's recommendation to sponsor community forums to solicit public input. To maximize public participation, the Town Council agreed to fund two public forums. The Boulevard Community Alliance sponsored a third, follow up forum.

D. Public Forums

The first forum on October 27, 1994, served as a public information and education seminar. Noted architect and urban designer Michael Freedman shared a two-hour slide presentation with approximately 150 Town residents and business leaders. Prepared with both good and bad examples from communities in the Bay Area, Freedman demonstrated that good design is not "rocket science" and that development can enhance a community when residents and local businesses are involved.

The second forum on November 12, 1994 was an all day design "charrette" organized and hosted by the Town of Los Gatos and the American Institute of Architects, Santa Clara Valley Chapter. "Charrette" comes from the French word for cart, coined when design students would frantically work as the cart would come by and mercilessly collect their sketches.

Today, a charrette is an intensive, collaborative design effort that includes professional planners, architects and the community working together over an extended period to reach consensus. The Los Gatos Boulevard Charrette drew considerable public support and participation. Over 80 businesses contributed food and services. An estimated 125 participants broke into nine teams put pen to paper to create nine unique visions for the Boulevard.

As a result of the interest generated by the two design forums, a third forum entitled "Share the Vision" was sponsored by the Boulevard Community Alliance on February 15, 1995, at the Neighborhood Center. Team leaders from the charrette presented their vision for the Boulevard. A panel of community representatives addressed questions from the audience and shared their views on Boulevard development. This event was attended by an estimated 150 members of the community.

E. Plan Objectives

Subsequent to the public forums, the Town Council adopted Resolution 1995-88, establishing the Mission, Goals and Objectives of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan. The Plan Objectives were established as follows:

Gateways

Major entrances to the Boulevard will have special landscaping, architecture, and/or artistic displays that announce Los Gatos as a distinct area.

Land Uses

Land uses will include the following: open space; community recreation; auto related, regional and neighborhood commercial; retail entertainment; and sufficient housing to support regional transportation centers. These uses will be implemented in such a way to keep the transition from the higher density mixed use area in the north to a mixture of residential and commercial clusters, and then to existing residential in the south.

Streetscape

The streetscape will be designed to protect and complement both valley and mountain vistas. Underground utilities are a must. Areas of distinct pedestrian and bicycle amenities (e.g. public arts, paths, benches, bike racks, streetlights, and transit stops) shall be clustered at key activity centers, intersections and crossing points.

Buildings

Architecture will provide distinctive, pedestrian friendly buildings which protect existing vistas and open spaces. All buildings must incorporate materials, colors and styles that reflect the history and character of Los Gatos.

Transportation

To service the Boulevard, downtown and local neighborhoods, attractive bus/shuttle stops and passenger drops will be located at activity centers. The design of the road will facilitate access to businesses and increase safety for and encourage use by pedestrians and bicyclists. Connections to regional transportation to Santa Cruz, San Jose, and the Light Rail will be connected at the gateways.

Development Incentives

Residents, businesses, property owners and the Town government working in partnership will identify and implement incentive programs for development.

Signs

Signs will complement the streetscape and meet commercial needs.

II. PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

A. Overview

Early in the public workshop process, participants envisioned Los Gatos Boulevard as a true "Boulevard" - a broad, landscaped thoroughfare which is traditionally thought of as a major community shopping and social gathering place. This concept should guide public improvement policy and development.

B. Opportunities and Constraints

Opportunities:

- Majority of Boulevard currently has existing landscaped medians in the center.
- Street trees are planted along sidewalk in most cases; upon site redevelopment a condition of approval is to plant/ replant street trees on Boulevard frontage.
- On-street parking in certain areas could be substituted with wider sidewalk and bike lane.

Constraints:

- No funding in 1996-2001 Capital Improvement Program for the improvement of Boulevard design or median improvement/construction.

C. Goals

The Goals for Los Gatos Boulevard Public Improvements are:

1. To reduce the speed of automobile traffic on the Boulevard and at major intersections while maintaining a safe, smooth and efficient flow to both local and through traffic, including emergency vehicles.
2. To make the Boulevard attractive and conducive to neighborhood and bicycle access along and across it.
3. To enhance and coordinate landscaping and amenities.
4. To provide attractive and convenient transit facilities that encourage their use.
5. To facilitate and promote access to commercial and residential uses along the Boulevard.

D. Policies

The public improvement policies directly relating to the street and sidewalks are:

1. Los Gatos Boulevard shall have six lanes of traffic (three in each direction) from the northern Town boundary south to Blossom Hill Road, then narrowing between Blossom Hill Road and Shannon Road to four lanes of traffic (two in each direction), then narrowing to two lanes (one in each direction) from Shannon Road south.
2. The width of traffic lanes on Los Gatos Boulevard and up to one street off the Boulevard on Blossom Hill Road shall be reduced to a minimum of 11 feet wide.
3. Existing medians and left turn lanes shall be retained.
4. On-street parking shall be creatively designed to coordinate the efficient flow of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Where on-street parking is used infrequently, the Town will consider replacing on-street parking with landscaping and pedestrian and/or bicycle improvements, subject to engineering analysis.
5. Free right turns shall be preserved wherever they can be safely and efficiently designed and coordinated with nodes.
6. Right-of-way width gained by narrowing traffic lanes, redesigning on-street parking and reconfiguring free right turn lanes shall be used for enhanced driveway, transit turnouts, sidewalks, bike lanes, landscaping, nodes, and street furniture where permitted.
7. The design, location and orientation of lighting, furniture and landscaping shall attract and encourage neighborhood activity and provide visual and physical buffers between pedestrian and automobile areas.
8. The design of any public improvements listed above must minimize adverse impacts upon adjacent residential areas.
9. Financing of improvements shall be shared by the public and private sectors

III. NODES

A. Overview

Traditionally, nodes are defined as activity centers within neighborhoods and districts. Nodes can be places for pedestrians and motorists. A node can be where major roadways meet, creating a break in the transportation corridor. At these breaks, there is a heightened sense of awareness for motorists, due to the time spent stopped and the high level of activity at the node.

The type and quality of development at a node will leave a strong impression. Development at these points should create anticipation and be distinctive. This can be achieved with a strong sense of architecture, a coherent spatial form, and amenities such as public pedestrian enclaves, plazas, water features, pedestrian connections, public art and pocket parks.

B. Opportunities/ Constraints

Opportunity:

- Nodes can establish visual and activity focal points.

Constraints:

- Locations identified as nodes may remain vacant or underdeveloped; the opportunity for establishing a node on private property is contingent upon receipt of applications to develop that property.
- Town funding may not be available for node development on public right-of-way.

C. Goals

The Goals for Nodes along the Boulevard are listed below. Nodes may be developed in the public right-of-way and on private property separately, or on a combination of both.

1. To encourage pedestrian activity at and movement across Los Gatos Boulevard at key points along the Boulevard.
2. To establish the perception of Los Gatos Boulevard as people friendly.
3. To connect, improve and unify the streetscape on both sides of Los Gatos Boulevard.
4. To establish activity focal points on private and public property along Los Gatos Boulevard.

D. Policies

The policies for Nodes in the public right-of-way and private land are:

1. Each node site shall have a clearly identifiable character as reflected through its hardscape, landscaping and street signage.
2. Crossing surfaces, paths and signal timing shall be conducive to and encourage pedestrian crossing and promote pedestrian and bicycle safety.
3. Each node site shall serve as a circulation and visual focal point along Los Gatos Boulevard.

IV. LAND USE

A. Overview

During the public workshops, land use was identified as a major component of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan. The consensus of opinion was that land uses along Los Gatos Boulevard should create a different shopping experience than uses in the Downtown area and should complement rather than duplicate those uses.

B. Opportunities and Constraints

Opportunities:

- Provide family orientation in uses.
- Provide more pedestrian/bike areas and links to adjacent residential areas to foster neighborhood use of commercial centers.
- Proximity to Route 85 and Highway 17 supports potential for destination commercial at North end of Boulevard.
- Expanding commercial development provides a dependable source of income, employment opportunities and goods and services for the community.

Constraints:

- Most of commercial and office uses abut residential property.

C. Goals

The Land Use Goals for Los Gatos Boulevard are:

1. To promote commercial activity that complements the whole Town.
2. To provide a dependable source of income, employment opportunities, goods and services.
3. To encourage a mixture of uses along Los Gatos Boulevard that are compatible with surrounding uses.
4. To provide a transition from higher density uses at the north end of Los Gatos Boulevard to existing residential uses at the south end of Los Gatos Boulevard.

D. Policies

In the long run, similar types of uses should be clustered geographically on Los Gatos Boulevard. As parcels become available for development or redevelopment, the following policies shall guide the planning process.

1. Auto related uses currently existing shall be allowed to remain indefinitely.
2. New and relocating auto-related businesses shall be located a) north of Los Gatos Almaden Road, b) adjacent to existing auto dealerships, or c) on a vacant site previously used for permitted auto sales.
3. Neighborhood commercial, multi-family residential and office uses shall be concentrated south of Los Gatos Almaden Road.
4. Uses on Los Gatos Boulevard south of Shannon Road shall be residential or office; existing non-residential uses shall not be intensified and existing vacant property and residential uses shall be developed as Single Family Residential.
5. Commercial and mixed use development north of Lark shall be in keeping with the Route 85 element of the General Plan and shall provide/incorporate Boulevard, Downtown and regional transit access accordingly.
6. New development must be designed in order to minimize adverse impacts upon adjacent residential areas.

V. GATEWAYS

A. Overview

A "Gateway" can be considered a major entry feature located at a prominent entry point to the Town or Los Gatos Boulevard specifically. An example of a gateway and its importance is the entryway at Los Gatos Boulevard and Route 85; the sense of entry that can be created there by a gateway feature is important because it is a prelude to the Boulevard and the Town of Los Gatos. Gateways can express the character of the Town and create landmarks.

B. Opportunities and Constraints

Opportunities:

- Chance to distinguish entryways to both Los Gatos and the Boulevard which welcome residents and visitors.
- May create landmarks and heighten the sense of place on the Boulevard.
- May involve private corporations and individuals in the design process.

Constraints:

- Town right-of-way may not be adequate to create "Gateways," resulting in a need to use private land.
- Town funding not currently available.

C. Goals

The Goals for Gateways are:

1. To establish gateways as architectural or landscape elements which welcome people to Los Gatos and Los Gatos Boulevard as a destination.
2. To convey positive attributes and values of the Town to visitors and residents through gateway design.
3. To ensure that gateway features shall create a landmark, spark civic pride, and add a heightened sense of identity to the Town.

D. Policies

1. Gateway features shall be highly visible to motorists and pedestrians.
2. Gateways shall be encouraged along Los Gatos Boulevard and at other main entrances to Town.
3. Gateway designs shall be clearly identifiable and create a precedent for development and design on Los Gatos Boulevard.
4. Gateways shall exhibit aesthetics appropriate to Los Gatos and reflect themes such as cats, the hills, orchards, or others indicative of Los Gatos.
5. A gateway may be combined with a node to increase pedestrian activity at that location.
6. Gateways shall be funded by private individual and corporate sponsors.

VI. PRIVATE IMPROVEMENTS

A. Overview

The Los Gatos Boulevard Design Standards have been developed and adopted in order to serve as recommendations for the design treatment of private improvements in the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan Area. The Standards are established for use by the Town Council, Planning Commission, staff, project applicants and property owners in providing for the public health, safety, welfare and convenience of the community. The Standards will ensure environmental and design quality in the development and redevelopment of Los Gatos Boulevard.

Opportunities:

- Guidelines serve as a mechanism to gain developers' cooperation in enhancing link from public right-of-way to private land with nodes/ gathering places.

Constraints:

- No mechanism for underdeveloped land to reach potential use intensity as designated in Boulevard policy.

B. Goals

The Design Standards for Los Gatos Boulevard have been developed and adopted to achieve the goals set forth below:

1. To preserve and protect the Town's scenic beauty through careful planning.
2. To encourage site and building design that is particularly suited to the site and contributes to the Town's unique character, natural beauty and openness.
3. To ensure new development will enhance the use, enjoyment and value of neighboring residential and commercial property.
4. To encourage a compatible relationship between proposed and existing development.

C. Policies

Through the Los Gatos Boulevard Design Standards, the Town of Los Gatos adopts the following policies:

1. Proposals shall be designed to fit the natural conditions of a site and respect scenic corridors.
2. Proposals should be designed to enhance the Boulevard through excellence in architectural design.
3. Proposals shall be designed to minimize interference with the privacy, quiet and views of surrounding residential properties.
4. Standardized building plans or corporate designs shall be discouraged.
5. Building and site design shall reflect the historic, natural and architectural setting unique to Los Gatos.
6. Pedestrian access to buildings and sites shall be encouraged.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

A. Public Improvements

1. Develop and implement guidelines for the design, location and orientation of on-street parking and transit turnouts, pedestrian oriented lighting, furniture, and landscaping; work with the appropriate agencies to relocate mailboxes and public phones when necessary.
2. Develop and implement funding and construction plans to narrow traffic lanes, reconfigure on-street parking, complete landscaping improvements, and enhance pedestrian, transit and bicycle access.
3. Amend the General Plan to include designated bike lanes on Los Gatos Boulevard.
4. Provide appropriate transition where lane alignment is modified.
5. Provide a landscape buffer zone between the curb and sidewalk when removal of the parking lane area results in curbs located closer to the travel lanes .
6. Maintain sight distance for motorists and pedestrians where landscaping and street furniture will be provided in the public right-of-way.
7. Amend the Circulation Element of the General Plan (Section 4.6.1(g.3.) about Los Gatos Boulevard by a) removing the section about four lanes from Samaritan Drive to Camino del Sol and adding bike lanes to the six lane discussion and b) removing the Nino Avenue to Spencer Avenue section.

B. Nodes

1. Develop nodes at the following intersections: Blossom Hill Road, Los Gatos Almaden Road, New Town/Village Square, Lark Avenue, and between Samaritan Drive and Lark Avenue as consistent with future development.
2. Encourage street furniture at node sites.
3. Review signal timing for adequate pedestrian crossing time.
4. Develop standards for node sites on public/private property which will address hardscape, landscape, and street furniture.

C. Land Use

1. Encourage replacement of vacated business south of Los Gatos Almaden Road with neighborhood commercial, multi-family, or office uses.
2. Amend the General Plan and rezone properties as needed to accomplish policies.
3. Establish development standards for all types of uses, incorporating guidelines for pedestrian access for clear direction to future developers.
4. Explore use of "air space" over Seven Mile Reservoir for auto storage or recreational purposes.
5. Encourage new or relocating auto-related businesses to relocate to available property north of Los Gatos-Almaden Road.
6. Amend Zoning Ordinance to allow Development Review Committee approval of all exterior changes to buildings, when consistent with Los Gatos Boulevard Design Standards.

D. Gateways

1. Locate a gateway at Samaritan Drive.
2. Architectural Standards Committee shall establish locations and standards for gateways at other main entrances to Town.
3. Architectural Standards Committee shall develop design standards for gateways that take into account visibility, location, maintenance and durability.
4. Conduct an open design competition that includes public and private professional judges to recommend the final gateway design(s).

E. Funding

The Town shall establish a committee comprised of three (3) property/ business owners, one Planning Commissioner and one Council member to explore funding alternatives for the construction of public improvements, development of nodes and creation of gateways.

LOS GATOS
BOULEVARD

DRAFT

DESIGN STANDARDS



TOWN OF LOS GATOS

FALL 1997

EXHIBIT E

LOS GATOS BOULEVARD

DESIGN STANDARDS

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IV. MODIFICATION OF DESIGN STANDARDS

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PREFACE

The Los Gatos Boulevard Design Standards are intended to provide guidance and specific recommendations for the architectural treatment, organization and mix of buildings and open space in the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan area. The Standards are established for use by the Planning Commission, Town Council, staff, project applicants and property owners in providing for the public health, safety, convenience, environmental and design quality in the development and redevelopment of Los Gatos Boulevard.

These Design Standards are intended to guide architects, designers and engineers in preparing plans to be considered by the Development Review Committee and Planning Commission during the Architecture and Site review process for new buildings, additions and any exterior changes to existing buildings (hereafter referred to as "proposals") located on Los Gatos Boulevard, within any zoning classification. Applicants shall demonstrate how their proposal meets the Design Standards.

B. GOALS

The Design Standards for Los Gatos Boulevard have been developed and adopted to achieve the goals set forth below:

- To preserve and protect the Town's scenic beauty through careful planning
- To encourage site and building design that is particularly suited to the site and contributes to the Town's unique character, natural beauty and openness.
- To ensure that development will enhance the use, enjoyment and value of neighboring residential and commercial property.

- To encourage a compatible relationship between proposed and existing development.

C. POLICIES

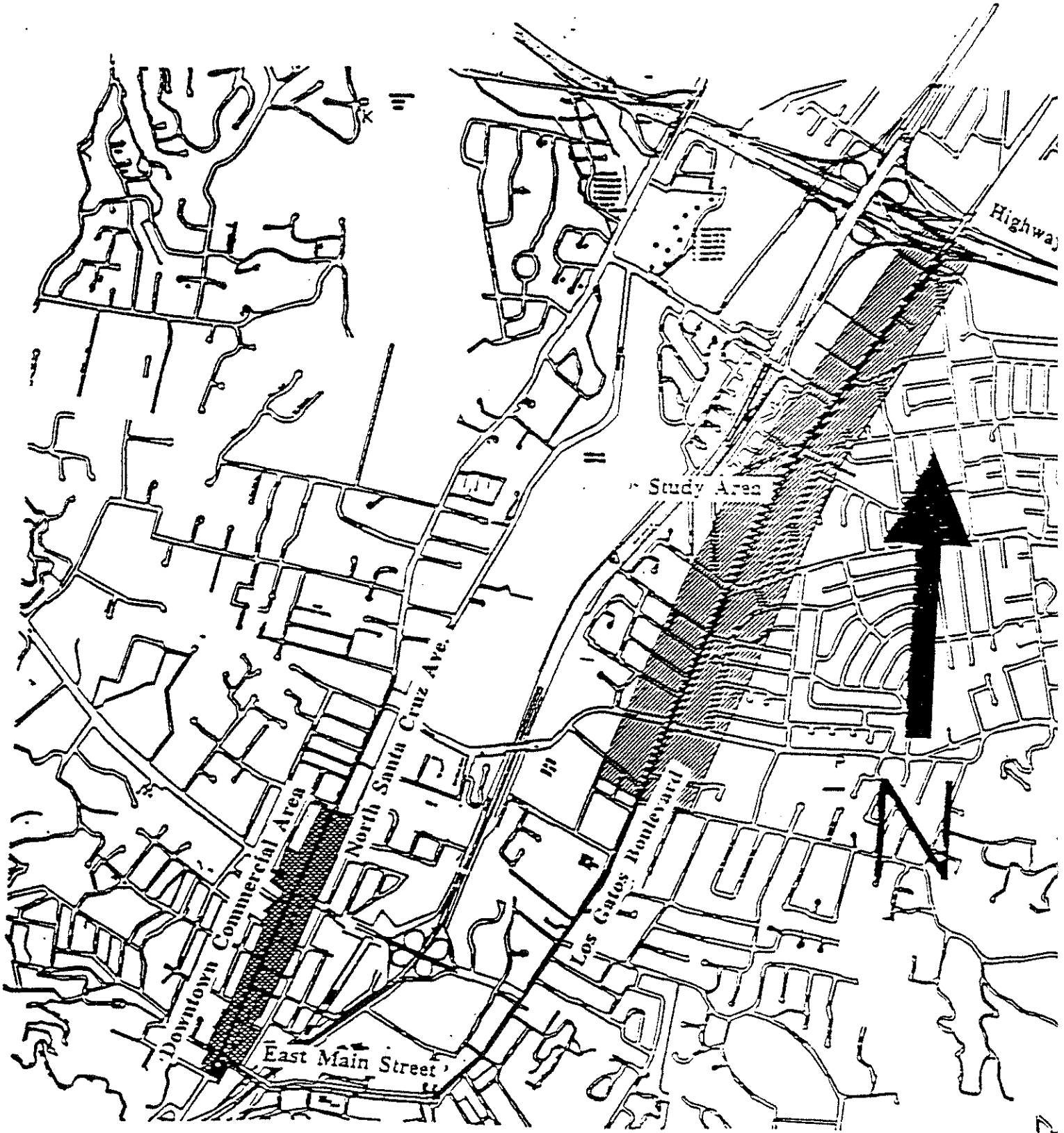
Through the Los Gatos Boulevard Design Standards, the Town of Los Gatos adopts the following policies:

- Proposals shall be designed to fit the natural conditions of a site and respect scenic corridors.
- Proposals should be designed to enhance the Boulevard through excellence in architectural design.
- Proposals shall be designed to minimize interference with the privacy, quiet and views of surrounding residential properties.
- Standardized building plans or corporate designs shall be discouraged.
- Building and site design shall reflect the historic, natural and architectural setting unique to Los Gatos.
- Pedestrian friendly access to buildings and sites shall be encouraged.

D. STUDY AREA

The Los Gatos Boulevard Study Area spans approximately 1.8 miles, from Samaritan Drive at the north to Spencer Avenue at the south. (Map of Study Area included on next page.)

Study Area Map



II. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

A. SITE DEVELOPMENT

1. General

The Planning Commission will assess any proposal based on its overall effect on Los Gatos Boulevard existing conditions as well as its compatibility with the surrounding area. The appearance of the proposal should complement the character of the surrounding area without negatively impacting existing conditions.

Site design will be evaluated based upon its contribution to the Town's beauty and openness, as well as its suitability for the location.

Site plans shall be integrated with the roadway to create harmony of design and continuity along the Boulevard. Harmony is achieved when the roadway and building location together create a sense of defined space.

A proposal shall include a demonstration of how the development will respect the pattern of existing development (streetscape) and natural surroundings (hillsides and trees).

A proposal shall not impair - directly or through the cumulative effect of new developments - the use, enjoyment and value of neighboring public and private property. Proposals should be designed to minimize interference with the privacy, quiet and views of residential neighbors.

Scenic vistas shall be protected.

2. Building Location

Proposals that result in a structure having more than one story, located adjacent to residential uses, shall be designed to minimize views into and shadows cast onto adjacent residential structures and yard areas. (Fig. 1)

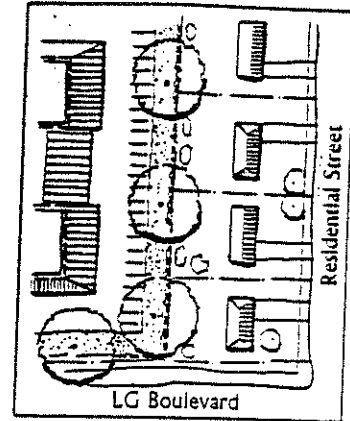
Buildings, not parking lots, should be seen along Los Gatos Boulevard whenever possible. Parking located on the street frontage makes businesses less visible to motorists and less accessible to pedestrians who are potential customers. (Fig. 2)

The location of buildings in relationship to Los Gatos Boulevard frontage shall be staggered to avoid a tunnel effect. (Fig. 3)

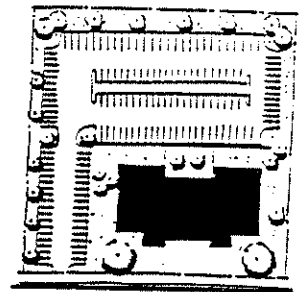
Corner lots shall be occupied by buildings of architectural excellence that generate interest and activity. Corner development should be designed in order to create a visual connection across an intersection.

A proposal shall emphasize framing a scenic view rather than screening or blocking it. (Fig. 4)

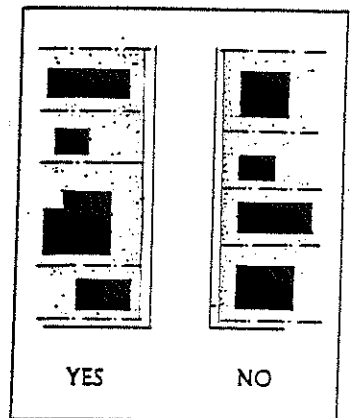
Proposed development shall be designed to fit a site's natural conditions, rather than alter a site to accommodate a particular building plan. Natural grade and vegetation shall be preserved to the maximum extent possible. Excessive cuts and fills shall be avoided.



1. Minimize Impact



2. Site Parking Away from Boulevard



3. Avoid Tunnel Effect



4. Frame Views

3. Parking Lot Layout

Parking areas shall be designed in a manner which minimizes the visual impact when viewed from the street and should be located along the sides and/or behind the proposed building(s). (Fig. 5)

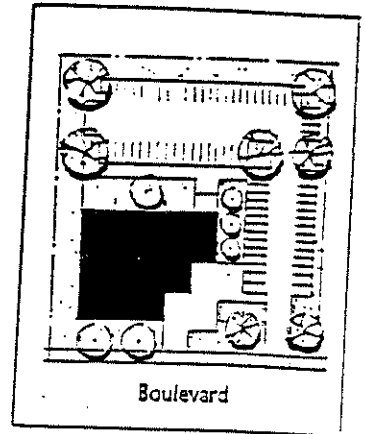
Parking lot surfaces shall be enhanced with modular concrete pavers and the use of brick or concrete bands to divide parking lot paving into small, interrelated segments whenever possible. All parking areas shall be landscaped to reflect Los Gatos' historic and natural character, including orchard trees, river rock, etc.. (Fig. 6)

Driveways and parking areas shall incorporate design and landscape elements which reduce the impact on adjacent residential properties and compliment the natural environment, where possible.

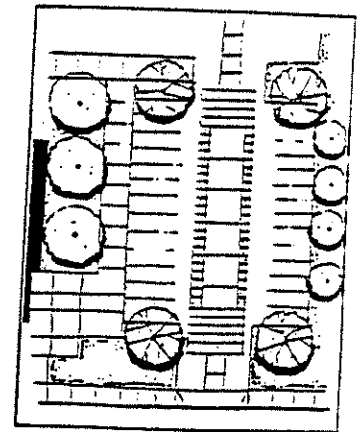
Parking for commercial or multiple family residential projects may be below grade when feasible. The preferred design is to provide subterranean parking with the first floor no more than four feet above grade. (Fig. 7)

Parking lot layout and landscaping shall be closely coordinated with the architectural design of the building(s).

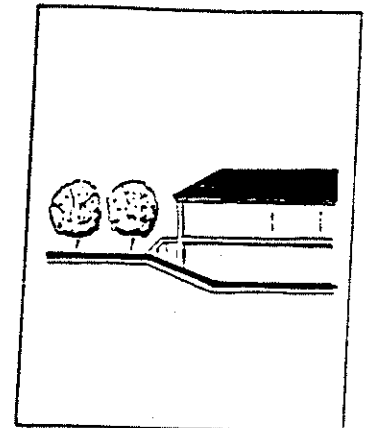
Loading and service areas shall not be visible from the street. Such areas located adjacent to a residential area or street shall be appropriately screened.



5. Minimize View of Parking from Street



6. Enhanced Surfaces



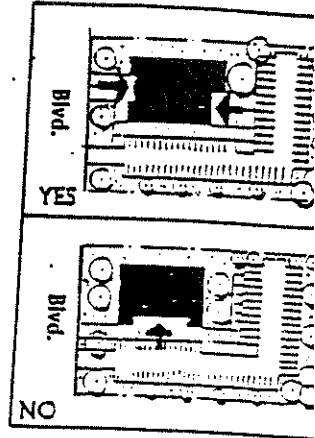
7. Below Grade Parking

4. Pedestrian Orientation

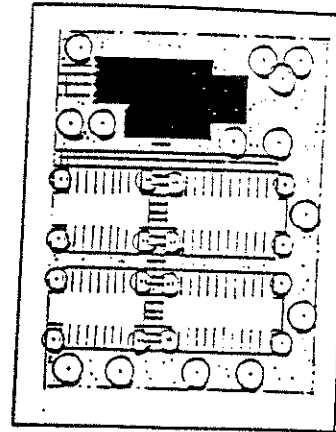
Proposals should be designed to have a pedestrian scale and should emphasize pedestrian entryways and access. Buildings located at the street frontage shall have pedestrian entries from the front as well as the rear or side(s) which face the parking lot. (Figures 8 and 11)

Large parking areas shall incorporate defined pedestrian paths and safe crossing points through the use of distinctive pavers, asphalt treatment, or landscape. (Fig. 9)

Proposals shall strike an appropriate balance between the demands of the automobile and the needs of the pedestrian (in the context of the development). (Fig. 10)



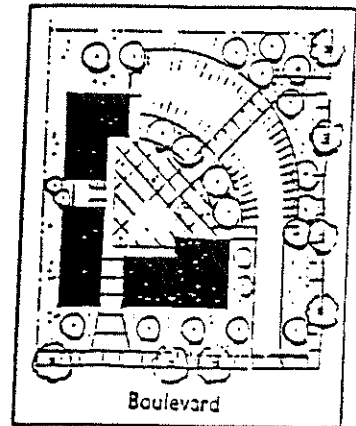
8. Pedestrian Access



9. Defined Paths



11. Pedestrian Compatibility



10. Balanced Access Between Pedestrian and Vehicle

B. BUILDING DESIGN

1. Mass and Scale

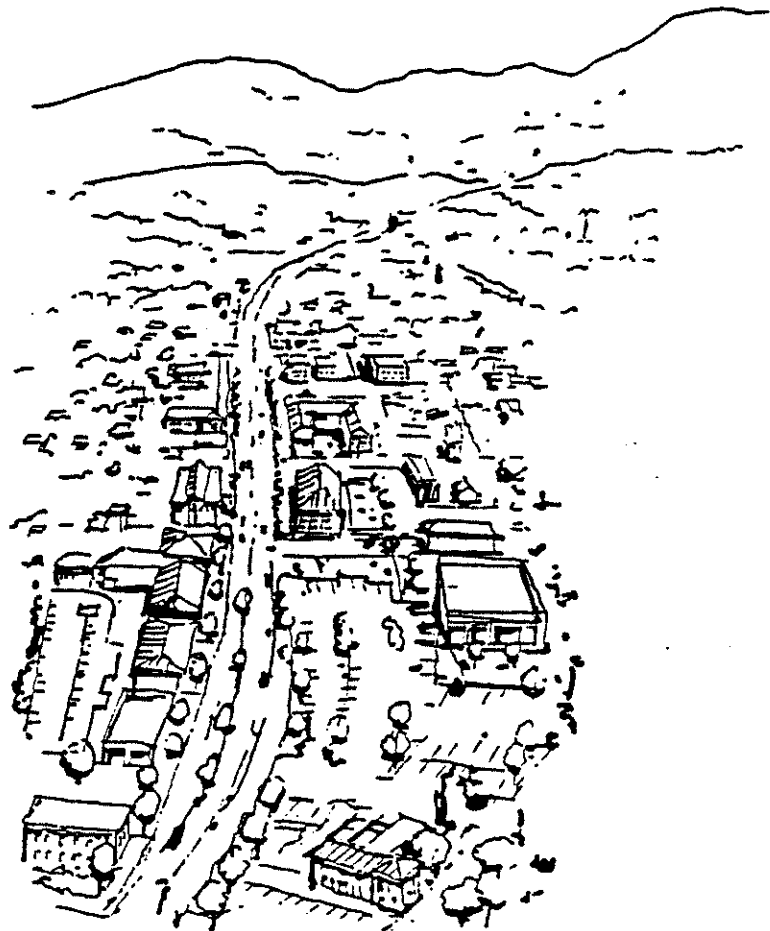
Simple building forms derived from and complimentary to classic residential building elements and the architectural character of Los Gatos residential areas shall be encouraged. This type of building form draws from Los Gatos' residential history, establishes a sense of timelessness and relates buildings to one another in mass and scale. (Fig. 1)



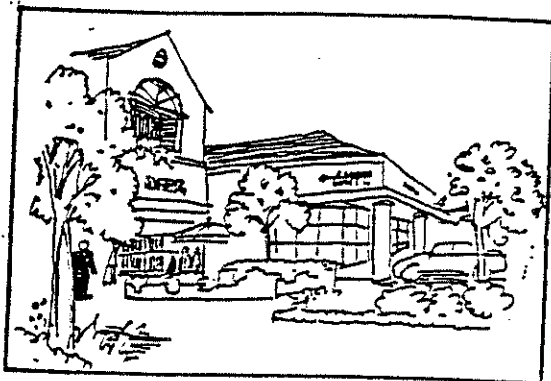
1. Classic Forms

Building height is the most obvious indicator of scale. Building height shall be considered in its relationship to surrounding development, commensurate to the width of Los Gatos Boulevard and shall not block scenic vistas or solar access. (Fig. 2)

Buildings should not overwhelm adjacent pedestrian areas. Taller two or three story buildings adjacent to pedestrian areas shall be stepped back to maintain small scale character near street level. Buildings shall be articulated on the ground level to create a human scale. (Fig. 3)



2. Relationship to Surroundings



3. Human Scale

- The degree of building setback shall be commensurate to the lot size.

2. Vehicle Services, Sales, and Related Activities

- Buildings shall not have a wall of garage doors facing the Boulevard or surrounding residential areas.
- Landscaping shall be incorporated in the design of a proposal to screen and soften building impact upon the Boulevard.

B. MIXED USE

Mixed use is considered a collection of residential and non-residential uses located on one parcel.

- The design standards for each use within a mixed use development shall be determined by analogy to the standards for uses listed in this Section.
- Below grade parking is encouraged to allow for adequate on-site parking.
- Parking for residences should be designated and separated from parking for other uses when possible.
- In residential development, required open space shall provide an attractive visual amenity for residents that may also serve as a buffer to adjacent retail/commercial or office uses.

C. MEDIUM AND HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

- Building style shall reflect existing simple residential forms in Los Gatos.
- Landscaping shall provide an appropriate buffer to adjacent or nearby commercial use(s).
- View corridors as perceived from within a proposed structure or addition shall be preserved.

D. GATEWAYS

Gateways shall be treated as a prelude to a special place, a landmark to identify the Town and Los Gatos Boulevard.

- Gateway elements should be compatible with the scale and proportion of the site and should emphasize transition into the Town of Los Gatos.

E. NODES

Each node shall be a distinctive, coherent open space laid out with features such as benches, trees, plants, and walkways.

- Nodes shall reflect the unique natural setting of Los Gatos through the incorporation of building and landscape materials that emphasize and complement such features as the Santa Cruz Mountains and their related viewshed.
- A node shall be designed and developed to serve as a pedestrian enclave.
- Node site pedestrian amenities should include seating and one or more of the following: bike rack, trash receptacle, fountain, planter, trees, newspaper stand.
- Architectural elements shall be consistent with the architecture on site and may include trellises, pergolas and/or lattice work to provide shade and/or visual interest at each node.

3. Architectural Elements

The main entry to a building shall be architecturally defined so as to create a focal point for the structure and add vitality to the streetscape. (Fig. 8)

Architectural elements shall be of reasonable height and not interfere with scenic corridors.

Fixed non-rigid canvas awnings, allowed to ripple in the breeze, are encouraged.

Fenestration shall be consistent with the architectural style of a proposal and shall add to the identity of a building. Mirrored or opaque glass in commercial buildings shall be discouraged. (Fig. 9)

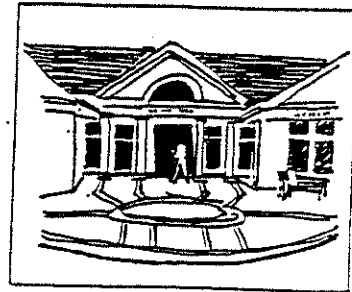
Structures shall be designed to achieve proportionality among architectural elements. A structure with proportion has functional and decorative elements like windows, roofs and doors which are in scale with one another.

Storefronts for individual retail tenants within a larger building should be "buildings within a building". Each building bay should be articulated with its own entrance, window grouping, and roofline. Repeating roof forms may be used to indicate the presence of individual tenants. (Fig. 10)

Faux elements, facades, and mansard roof forms are not allowed.

Architectural elements shall provide for diversity and interest. Standardized building types recognizable anywhere shall be discouraged.

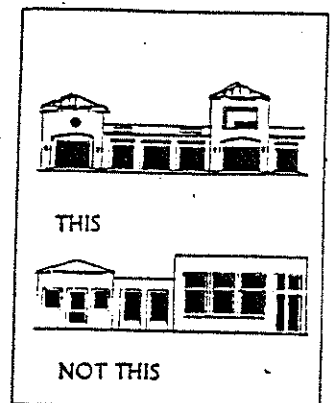
Lighting of architectural features shall be encouraged. Lighting must shine onto on-site improvements.



8. Defined Entryway



9. Fenestration



10. Storefronts

III. USE SPECIFIC STANDARDS

When a proposed use is not addressed in the following sections, the Planning Director shall determine the Design Standards for the use in question by analogy to the listed uses.

A. COMMERCIAL

1. Neighborhood Commercial and Shopping Centers

Neighborhood Commercial development and Shopping Centers should have an integrated, cohesive design that reads as a whole building form. The overall design should allow for harmony between individual storefronts yet still allow identifiable tenant entrances.

- Pedestrian amenities - low level lights, benches, trees, umbrellas - should be installed along the frontage of the center to make it a safer and more pleasant place to shop and eat.
- An identifiable architectural entrance sign may be installed to project a unified image.
- Pedestrian pathways from residential areas located to the rear or side of the center shall be established. The pathways shall be encouraged where the rear or side of a center is abutting a residential street rather than residential property.
- Landscaping shall be consistent with the architectural style of the center. Shade trees should be installed as an amenity and to help define travel lanes. "Orchard" planting is recommended to maintain visibility from the road. New lights with a pedestrian character should also be installed where possible.
- Exterior materials and finishes shall be consistent throughout the entire development.
- Commercial centers shall not have a rectangular "big-box" design.

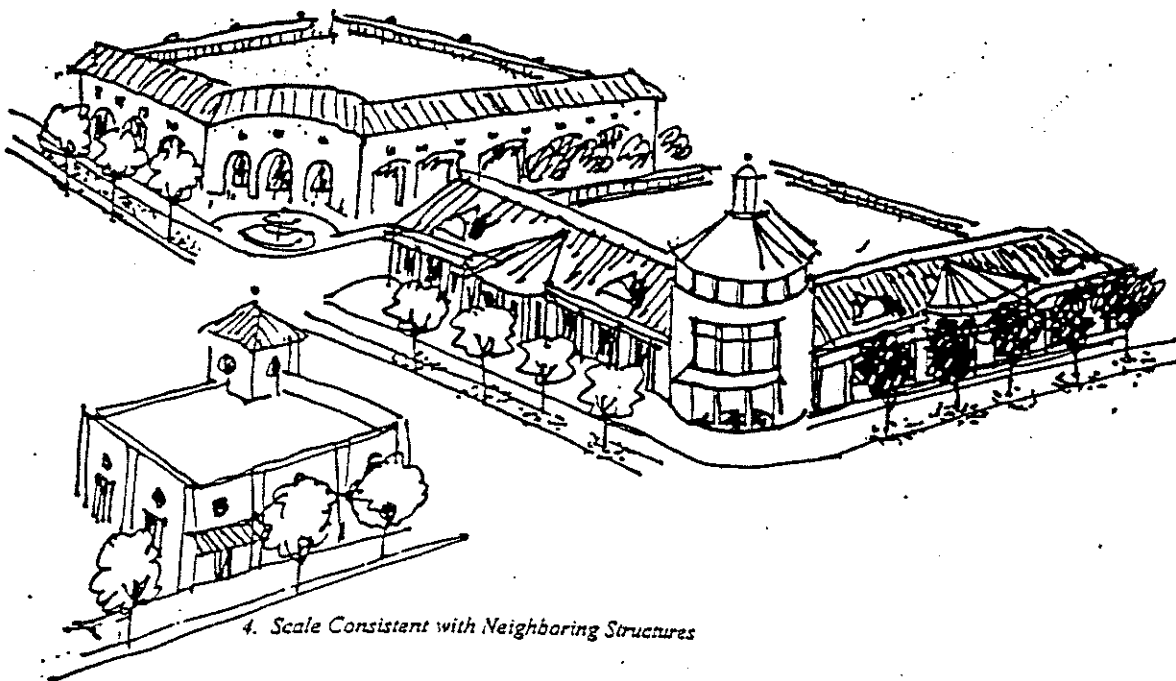
LOS GATOS BOULEVARD DESIGN STANDARDS

Large undifferentiated wall planes on the street elevation are not allowed. If a blank wall is unavoidable or existing near a pedestrian area, it should be treated with lattice work, landscaping, or other elements to soften its impact.

Large monolithic structures are not allowed. Separations between structures or recessed facade areas shall be used to break large building masses into units similar in size to adjacent and nearby smaller lot development. A proposal may consist of a collection of small buildings connected by arcades, paths, gardens and retaining walls, with particular attention to preserving and protecting existing views.

Buildings shall be articulated to reduce the apparent mass of the structure. Changes in building plane and height, and the addition of elements such as bay windows, porches, porticos or dormers create shadow and texture on the building mass. Rooflines should also be articulated with elements such as secondary gables or hip roofs.

Architectural features such as roof forms, pilasters, columns, balconies, window details and building facade articulation shall be effectively used to maintain a scale consistent with neighboring structures. (Fig. 4)



4. Scale Consistent with Neighboring Structures

2. Texture and Materials

Exterior colors should be subdued and used to complement the architecture and natural setting. A color should be used with an awareness of the surface size to which it is applied.

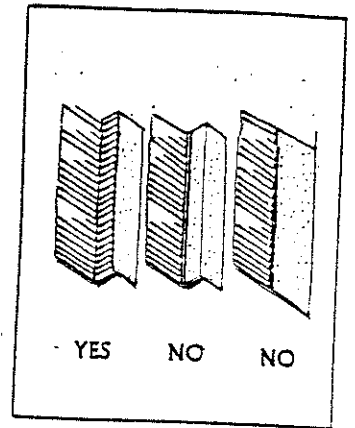
Building materials shall be used to enhance the architectural style of the structure. Materials shall "wrap" around corners and not be discontinued or altered on outside edges or flat planes. (Fig. 5)

A proposal's exterior colors and materials shall reflect the natural setting of Los Gatos.

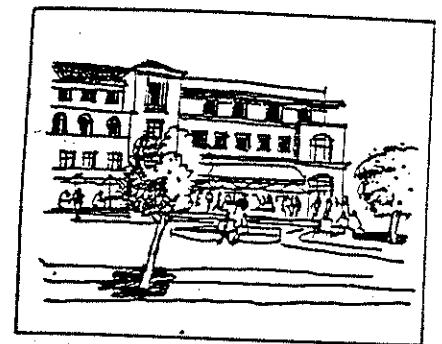
A proposal's materials and colors shall be sensitive to adjacent commercial structures and residential properties and promote visual continuity along Los Gatos Boulevard.

Buildings shall have visual order. Buildings shall be designed to create patterns of texture, light, color and materials. (Fig. 6)

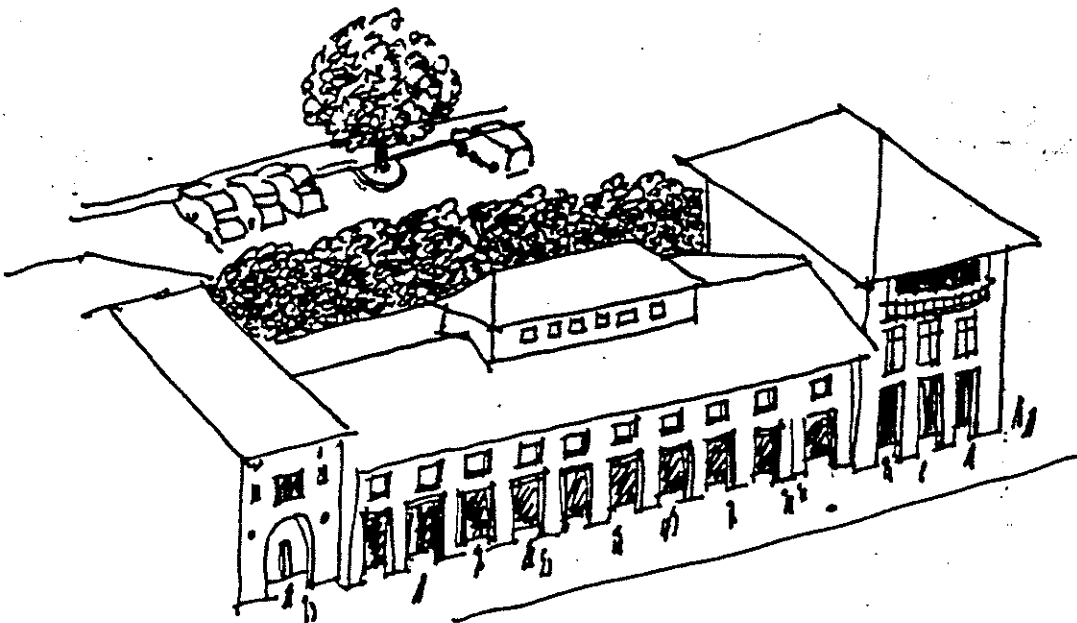
A building shall be articulated with changes in building planes, colors, material and rhythm. (Fig. 7)



5. Exterior Materials



6. Visual Order



7. Building Articulation

IV. MODIFICATION TO DESIGN STANDARDS

The Design Standards for new buildings, additions, and exterior remodels in the Los Gatos Boulevard Study Area are established as guidelines which reflect current Town policy for community design. In the event a project might be adversely affected by these standards, the applicant may present a written request for modification through the Architecture and Site Approval process. If the Planning Commission deems the requested modification worthy of favorable consideration, the modification may be allowed provided that findings are made that such modification will not be detrimental to the health, safety, general welfare, convenience and quality of life of any adjacent residents and of the community. If the modification is not allowed by the Planning Commission, the applicant may appeal to the Town Council. No modification may be considered without a public hearing.

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RESOLUTION 1997-138

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
APPROVING AMENDMENT No. 1 TO THE LOS GATOS BOULEVARD PLAN
REGARDING LANE WIDTH**

WHEREAS, the Town Council conducted public hearings for consideration of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan on September 15, 1997 and December 1, 1997, and adopted the Plan on December 15, 1997; and

WHEREAS, during these hearings, the Town Council considered public input on the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Town has in good faith worked with residents, merchants and property owners to address their concerns, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to amend the plan to address public concerns about bike lanes; and

WHEREAS, the Public Improvements section of the Plan will not include addition of bike lanes to the right-of-way.

RESOLVED, the Town Council finds that the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan will not have a significant environmental impact and makes the Negative Declaration.

RESOLVED, the new striping plan shall be evaluated by the Town one year after the striping is completed.

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Council amends the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan Public Improvements Policies as follows:

* * *

II.D.5 Right-of-way width gained by narrowing traffic lanes and redesigning on-street parking shall be used for enhanced driveway, transit turnouts, sidewalks, landscaping, nodes and street furniture where permitted.

* * *

II.D.9 The width of traffic lanes on Los Gatos Boulevard and up to one street off the Boulevard on Blossom Hill Road shall be reduced to a minimum of 11 feet wide.

* * *

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Council amends the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan Public Improvements Implementation Measures as follows:

* * *

VII.A.2 Develop and implement funding and construction plans to narrow traffic lanes, reconfigure on-street parking, complete landscaping improvements, and enhance pedestrian, transit and bicycle areas.

* * *

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Council of the Town of Los Gatos hereby adopts the amended Los Gatos Boulevard Plan attached hereto as Exhibit A.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Town Council held on the 15th day of December 1997, by the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

AYES: Randy Attaway, Jan Hutchins, Mayor Linda Lubeck

NAYS: Joanne Benjamin, Steven Blanton

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

SIGNED:

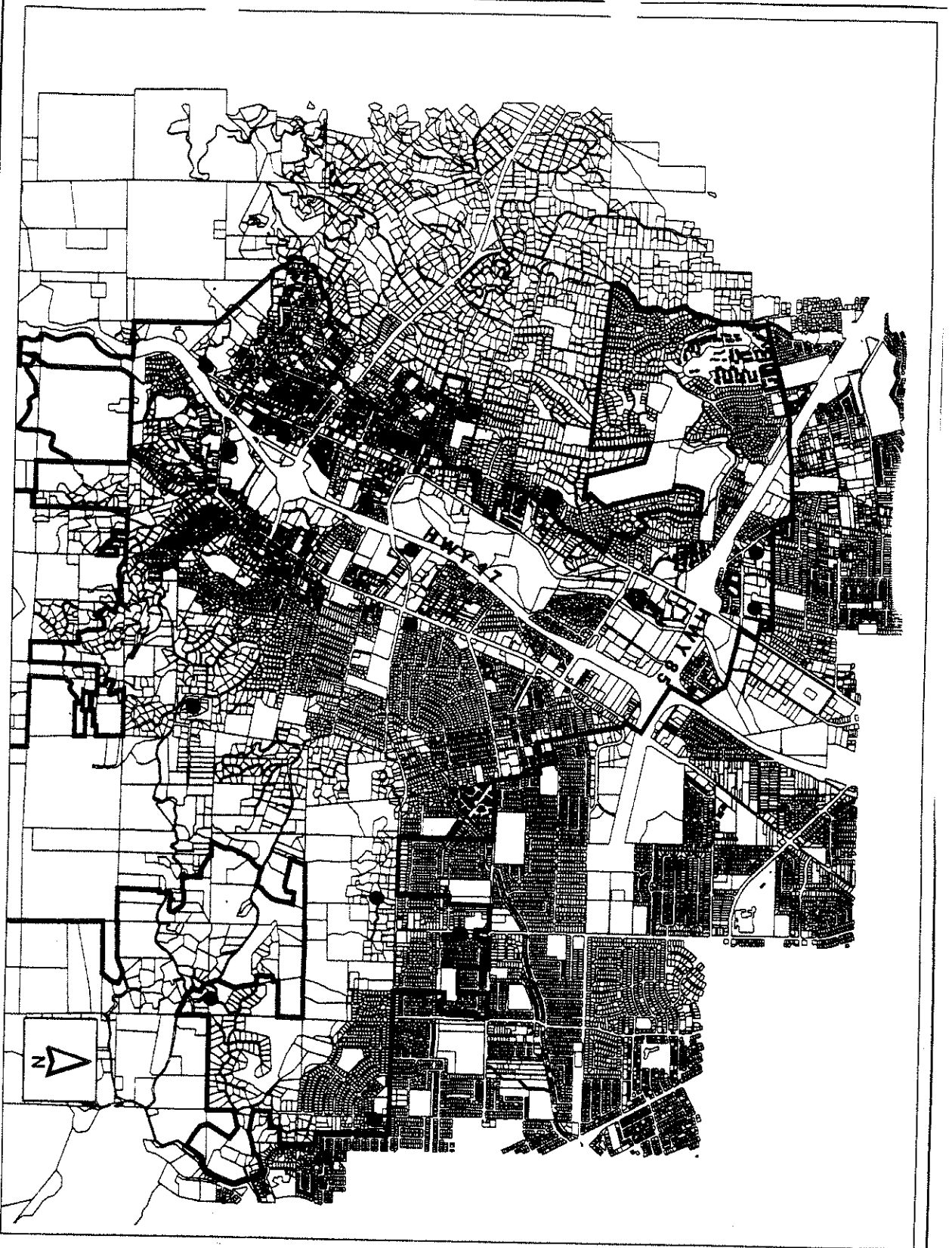


MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA

ATTEST:



CLERK OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
NOTICE OF PUBLIC
HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Council of the town of Los Gatos has scheduled a public hearing for **Monday, December 15, 1997**, at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Civic Center, 110 East Main Street, Los Gatos, to:

Consider recommendations of the Planning Commission for a General Plan Land Use Map Update - General Plan Amendment GP-97-0002 -

a) Adopt a resolution updating the 1985 Los Gatos General Plan Land Use Map. The recommended Land Use Map update identifies uses on a parcel by parcel basis. Approximately 150 parcels are recommended for land use amendment. General areas are represented by a dot on the adjacent map.

b) Adopt Urban Growth Boundary. These matters are Categorically Exempt. If anyone wishes to challenge these matters in court, they may be limited to raising only those issues they or anyone else raised in the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the town Clerk at, or prior to the public hearing.

A complete record concerning these matters is on file for public inspection in the Office of the Town Clerk at 110 East Main Street, Los Gatos.

INTERESTED PERSONS are encouraged to appear and be heard at this public hearing.

TOWN OF LOS GATOS
/s/ Marian V. Cosgrove/
Town Clerk
(Pub LG 12/3/97)

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**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 05/25/2021

ITEM NO: 2

DATE: May 21, 2021
TO: Council Policy Committee
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Discuss and Provide Input to the Town Council Regarding Rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Council Policy Committee discuss and provide input to the Town Council regarding the rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

BACKGROUND:

On January 25, 2021, the Council Policy Committee approved their work plan. One of the items on the work plan was the rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan. The Los Gatos Boulevard Plan was adopted in 1997. Over the last number of years there have been many comments regarding the fact that the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan may no longer be relevant given the adoption of the Commercial Design Guidelines in 2005 and the pending draft 2040 General Plan. The draft General Plan currently includes an Implementation Program that calls for the rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

DISCUSSION:

The Policy Committee should consider and discuss the following preliminary questions:

1. Should the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan be rescinded?
2. Should any of the existing provisions in the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan be incorporated into other policy document(s)?

PREPARED BY: Joel Paulson
Community Development Director

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and Town Attorney

PAGE 2 OF 2

SUBJECT: Los Gatos Boulevard Plan Rescission

DATE: May 21, 2021

CONCLUSION:

The purpose of this item is to facilitate a discussion of this work plan item with the Council Policy Committee to provide direction on whether the Town Council should consider rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

Attachment:

1. Los Gatos Boulevard Plan: <https://www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/373/Los-Gatos-Boulevard-Plan-?bidId=>



**Minutes of the Town Council Policy Committee Regular Meeting
May 25, 2021**

The Town Council Policy Committee of the Town of Los Gatos conducted a regular meeting via Teleconference via COVID-19 Shelter in Place Guidelines on Tuesday, May 25, 2021, at 5:00 p.m.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Maria Ristow, Marico Sayoc.

Staff Present: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager; Robert Schultz, Town Attorney; Joel Paulson, Community Development Department Director; Robert Gray, Chief Building Official; Holly Zappala, Management Analyst.

CONSENT ITEMS (TO BE ACTED UPON BY A SINGLE MOTION)

1. Approve the Draft Minutes of the April 27, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting.

Approved.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

2. Discuss and Provide Input to the Town Council Regarding Rescission of the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan.

Joel Paulson, Community Development Director, presented the staff report.

After discussion, the Committee unanimously agreed to forward a recommendation to the Town Council to rescind the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan. The Committee also directed staff to further analyze the Los Gatos Boulevard Plan to determine if any of its elements should be incorporated into other land use policy documents as appropriate.

PAGE 2 OF 2

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Regular Council Policy Committee Meeting of May 25, 2021

DATE: June 22, 2021

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the May 25, 2021 meeting as approved by the Town Council Policy Committee.

/s/ Holly Zappala, Management Analyst